**How to read a poem**

Slow down and savour the language; it’s meant to be savoured

Read it more than once

Read parts of it more than once

Read it aloud

Notice how you feel and how words and images create feelings

Notice images, the pictures the the poem puts in your mind

Notice the other sensory language the phrases and the lines you can taste, touch hear and smell

Notice the words and phrases that you like

Notice the sound patterns, like alliteration or assonance, rhyme or rhythm

Notice how a poet uses punctuation and the whiter space, breaks lines, breaks stanzas, and locates the words on the page

Notice how the poem begins and ends

Think about the poet’s big idea; why he or she might have written it

Think about who is speaking in the poem

Mark the lines you love, that tell you something about yourself, the power of language, or the human condition

Mark all the lines you want to talk about- because they fill you up, move you,make you laugh, confuse you, create images, give you goose bumps

From: Nancie Atwell *In the middle*